

July 2011

Transitions, Change and Challenge



The transition has begun! Greetings from the Bishop-elect or the “Almost-Bishop”, as Randy Sizemore refers to me. Times of transition are strange, we are not yet what we will be, but we are no longer what we were. I don’t think I’m having an identity crisis, but it’s all a little surreal. I’m asked to approve new business cards and they’re imprinted “Rev. Bruce D. Hill, Bishop”. I have to admit that looks strange even to me. Obviously, this is not the first major change in my life or ministry. There have been others and there will be more. I know too that you have, and perhaps are, experiencing transitions in your life and ministry as well. Making good transitions challenge each of us.

Transitions, change and challenge require a lot of work and prayer. On one hand, just being a Christian in our culture is a challenge. It reminds me of the account we read about in the gospels when the disciples were surrounded by thousands of hungry people and all they had was a lunch some mom packed for her son. How do you feed thousands of people with the equivalent of a peanut butter and jelly sandwich? Talk about a challenge... The disciples’ response was to give up; they said, “send the people home, let them get their own meals.” Of course you know the whole story and they put what they had in Jesus’ hands and the whole situation changed. It changed from a challenge to an opportunity; an opportunity to meet people’s needs and be part of a miracle.

Do you see our world as a challenge or an opportunity to be part of something amazing for God? We are surrounded with opportunities to touch lives, to impact our lost and hurting world with the Good News about Jesus. What Jesus asks is for us to give him who we are, what we have, and then to trust him to do something amazing. As we go through this time of transition together, I ask you to pray for your church, for our denomination, and for me as the new Bishop. And when you pray, ask the Lord to show us where we can join with him in building his Kingdom. I’m not sure exactly what the Lord is up to in the EC Church today, but I know he’s at work and I look forward to how, together, we can be a part of what he’s going to do in the days to come. Please pray with me that the Lord will help each of us to see the opportunities all around us to serve him, to touch lives, and to build his church.

In Christ’s service,

Bruce

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EVANGELICAL CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

E.C. LEADER



National Conference Chair Prayer & Praise

- ◆ Praise the Lord for the many good things happening during these days of transition for Bishop-elect Bruce Hill and Conference Minister Gary Kuehner. Pray for them as they adjust to their new surroundings at Church Center and their new responsibilities. Remember, too, that the service of consecration for our new Bishop will be held on Sunday, August 28.
- ◆ Dr. Anthony Blair began his tenure as the seventh president at Evangelical on July 1. Pray for him and the seminary as they further develop their new working relationship and get to know each other better. Pray for them as they prepare for the new semester and a busy fall schedule.
- ◆ We rejoice in the number of good reports that we are receiving from those pastors and churches that recently experienced pastoral assignment changes, but we continue to urge you to pray for those congregations that are still in need of a pastor.
- ◆ Praise God for the good experience that Gary Brown and the rest of his team had on their "YOU LEAD" mission trip to the Ukraine.
- ◆ Praise God that Matthew Gueh returned safely to Liberia, Africa. Pray for our churches in that nation and for Matthew as he oversees that ministry work.
- ◆ Pray for a powerful moving of God's spirit during the upcoming sessions of Herndon Campmeeting (July 22-31). This year's Evangelist is Rev. Randy Sizemore.
- ◆ Pray for the continued transformation of lives during the final month of this year's camping season at Twin Pines, Camp ECCO and Rock River Bible Camp.

Bishop's Consecration Service

Sunday, August 28; 7:00 p.m.

Community Evangelical Church
51 Green Valley Road, Sinking Spring, PA 19608

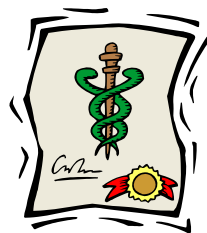
Celebratory receptions are being scheduled for the Great Lakes Region in September and October.



I'm sure that your fall plans are being made and soon it will be on to the winter and spring months. I would love to preach in your church. One of my goals is to preach at least once in every EC Church by the end of my service as Bishop. If you'd like me to preach at your church please send Jodi, my Administrative Assistant, an email jeanhart@eccenter.com. I have dates available, so why wait? Send us your date(s) now so you (and I) aren't disappointed.

News from Benefits Corporation /Compensation Committee

- **Health Insurance:** We received our initial health insurance renewal quote. Aetna paid 27% more in healthcare services provided to our plan members than what was paid in premiums. Normally a healthcare insurer anticipates paying 15% less in healthcare claims than premiums to cover the administrative costs of the plan. When more is paid to cover claim costs than what is paid in premiums an insurer has no choice but to significantly increase premiums. The EC Benefits Board is actively working to reduce the premium increase. There are alternative plan designs available that may reduce the overall increase but could include a reduction in benefits. One item that is certain is that the current plan design is no longer economically feasible for the EC Church. Be assured that the Benefits corporation has already looked at a number of options. Nevertheless you can anticipate changes in next year's health care benefits that will require participants to underwrite a larger share of the financial burden for services they receive.



The paragraph above does not apply to the retiree health insurance. The retiree health insurance Medicare supplemental plan renewal rates have not been released. We will distribute the retiree health insurance rates when they become available.

- **Retirement:** As in years past Jennifer Buehler, Wells Fargo Advisors, had the most visitors during National Conference but please remember she is available for retirement planning assistance year round. Jennifer may be reached at 1-800-468-8685. We hope all our pastors are actively planning for your retirement; making consistent contributions to your 403(b) or Roth account (in addition to your church's contributions) and at a minimum spending an hour or two annually with a financial professional reviewing your investments. Please don't delay in becoming personally involved in your retirement planning.



- **Workers Compensation:** Thank-you to all that have paid the workers' compensation invoices in a timely manner. For those that haven't the due date was July 1. Payments for the Disability and Benefit Corp Services fee were due January 15 and April 15 respectively, both fees are listed on the 2011 Treasurer's Guide available on www.eccenter.com/ecchurch/forms.

If there are any questions with your benefits please contact Dave King, Benefits Administrator, at the EC Church Center, 1-800-866-7581 or dking@eccenter.com. I can also be contacted at the EC Church Center or khenry@eccenter.com

Kevin Henry
Controller





SUMMER GMC VBS PROJECT:



For 2011, our VBS/MMK project will be to help **El Retiro Children's Home in Montemorelos, Mexico**. The funds that are collected will be used to replace the roof on the dining hall, which leaks badly. We are hope to raise

\$10,000 for this project.

FALL FAMILY MISSION RALLY:

Save the dates of October 14-15 for the GMC Fall Family Mission Rally at Salem EC, Lenhartsville.

Again this year the Friday afternoon program is geared for our pastors and spouses and the general sessions on Saturday will have tracks for children and adults. Stay tuned for more information.



SPEND-A-DAY BECOMES MISSIONARY PRAYER PARTNERS:

Of all the ways the EC Church facilitates and encourages our missionaries, the "Spend-A-Day" prayer initiative always scores near the top with our missionaries! Beginning January 1, 2012 the "Spend-A-Day" program will become "Missionary Prayer Partners." The concept of connecting individuals and missionaries to mutually pray for each other on specific dates will remain the same but we will initiate a few changes to make this important ministry more accessible and user-friendly.



- Coordination of the Missionary Prayer Partners will be from the GMC office (Carla Sizemore).

- You will be able to select from the participating missionaries, available months and download the needed information from the GMC website or by calling the GMC office.
- We will no longer collect the \$1.00 donation with each participant's prayer slip.
- An informational/instructional brochure and DVD will be produced to guide interested participants through the new Missionary Prayer Partners program.

The remaining months of the original 2011 Spend-A-Day program will be handled by Carla Sizemore at the GMC office. We will do our best to navigate this transition smoothly but please do not hesitate to contact Carla with any questions or concerns. Our ultimate goal is to have even more of our members partnering in prayer with our EC missionaries!

MISSION LEADERS LUNCHEON:

The Global Ministries Commission is constantly working on improving on the ways we keep our local church informed and engaged in the Great Commission. This Fall, along with the GMC publications: Window On The World, The EC Scene, Short Stops, the GMC website and Randy's Facebook page, we are introducing a Mission Leaders' Luncheon. These informational lunch gatherings will be scheduled for each region's local church mission leaders and will give us yet another opportunity to inform, update and educate our local churches on the exciting things God is doing through the EC church both here and abroad. Watch for your invitation in the coming months.



Mission Leaders' Luncheon

Call the Church Center (1-800-866-7581) or email (blong@eccenter.com) to place your order for the 2011 National Conference Journal. The Journal will be available by August 15th. IF you have not already placed your order do it today. The cost is:



- Binder w/cover & spine insert \$7.00
- Section Dividers \$4.00
- Printed Contents \$14.00
- Additional CD—WORD format \$5.00
(One (1) copy of the Conference Journal on CD will be sent to each church FREE of charge.)

News from Evangelical



ABOVE AND BEYOND...

As the old fiscal year ended on June 30, we celebrated God's goodness to Evangelical through the provision of \$66,582.67 for the Annual Fund. This was \$11,582.67 above the goal of \$455,000 and represents the largest ever yearly giving to this critical fund, which provides a significant portion of the seminary's regular operating expenses. THANK YOU to each one who had a part in this Ephesians 3:20 experience! We praise God for you and for the evidence of his hand upon Evangelical.



NEW LOGO... This month Evangelical officially unveils its new logo. The Cross is at the center, and the varying beams coming from it represent the paths of ministry preparation as students come here to live and learn— and

then go out into the world to lead in spiritual transformation.



MODULAR COURSES for fall semester include two concentrated offerings with special practicality for the local church. "Nuts and Bolts of Youth Ministry", taught by Dr. David Coryell, meets on six Mondays from 3:00-9:30, and "Group Dynamics", taught by Dr. John Tornfelt, meets monthly on four Friday evenings and Saturdays from August to November. Your church could benefit by having a lay or staff person audit a course. Call Ellis Kirk at 717-866-5775 for details.

LEADERSHIP CONTACT... Fall semester offerings include "Old Testament Survey," taught by Rev. Jason Dickinson from September 6 to October 18, and

"Preaching, I", taught by Dr. Tim Valentino from October 25 to December 6. Classes meet in Zinn Commons on Tuesday evenings from 6:30-9:15 pm. Cost is \$175 per course. Part of the EC Local Preacher Course of Study, these classes are also open to anyone interested in spiritual enrichment and leadership development. For more information call the Center for Leadership Impact at 717-866-5775 or email msigman@evangelical.edu



SAVE THE DATE... The annual Friends of Evangelical Banquet will be held at

Calvary Church, Lancaster, on October 21. Gordon MacDonald, well known pastor and author, will be the speaker.